

Compliments of James Black

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

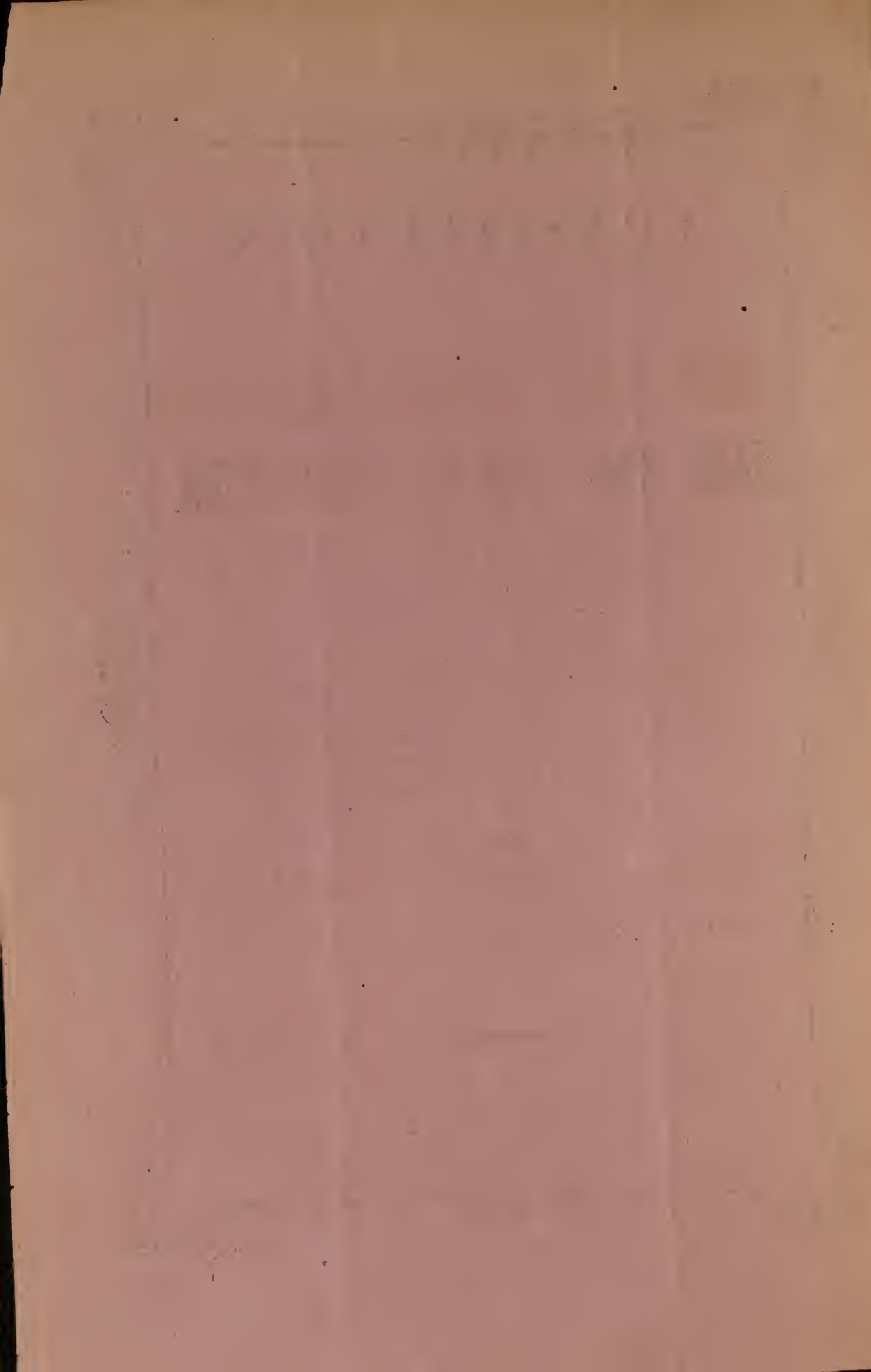
HANS GRAF FAMILY ASSOCIATION.

Si Deus nobiscum quis contra nos.

ORGANIZED AT LANCASTER, PA., AUGUST 22nd, 1866.

LANCASTER.
S. A. WYLIE, STEAM BOOK AND JOB PRINTER, INQUIRER OFFICE.

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Hans Graf Family Association.

PRESIDENT.

LEVI W. GROFF,.....BAREVILLE, PENNA.

VICE PRESIDENT.

DAVID G. SWARTZ,.....LANCASTER, do

SECRETARY AND TREASURER.

E. G. GROFF,.....NEW HOLLAND, do

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

H. H. GROFF,.....	CARLISLE,	do
M. G. WENGER,.....	LEACOCK,	do
LEVI GROFF,.....	BAREVILLE,	do
D. G. ESHLEMAN,.....	LANCASTER,	do
C. F. GROFF,.....	FARMERSVILLE,	do
JACOB F. GROVE,.....	BALTIMORE,	MD.
DAVID G. MARTIN,.....	REIDENBACH'S STORE,	PENNA.
E. BURKHOLDER,.....	FARMERSVILLE,	do
M. B. ESHLEMAN,.....	PARADISE,	do



78612
James Black
Feb. 19. 1867

CONSTITUTION.

I.

This Association shall consist of the decendants of Hans Graf, who fled from the persecutions against the Mennonites in Switzerland, near the close of the seventeenth century; and afterwards settled on Graf's run, where Levi W. Groff now resides, in West Earl township, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, Anno Domini 1717. He having been the first settler of Earl township, (since divided into Earl, East Earl and West Earl,) which was named in honor of him, A. D., 1729; Earl being the English name for Graf.

II.

The object of this association, shall be to trace up the history of said Hans Graf; to make a family tree of all his descendants; to compile and preserve their history; collect information, relics, and mementoes, and to hold meetings for social intercourse and mutual improvement.

III.

The organization of this association shall be in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, and shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and an Executive Committee, composed of nine members, which shall, as far as may be practicable, be so distributed that the descendants of each one of the six sons of said Hans Graf, shall have at least one member of said committee.

IV.

The President, or Vice President shall preside over the meetings of the association, preserve order, and submit such matters for their action, as may be deemed necessary. He may call special meetings, whenever requested to do so by a majority of the Executive Committee.

V.

The Secretary shall have charge of the books and records of the association, and shall do the general correspondence, and keep correct minutes of the proceedings of each meeting.

VI.

The Treasurer shall have the custody of the funds of the association, relics, donations, and any property that may come in its possession. He shall be authorized to pay out any money in the Treasury upon the order of the President.

VII.

The Executive Committee, in conjunction with the other officers, shall have the general direction and management of the association ; the disposition of its funds ; and may by appointment fill any vacancy that may occur in their committee, or in any office of the association, until the next annual meeting, to which they shall make a report of all their proceedings.

VIII.

All officers shall be elected by the annual meeting, and shall continue in office until the next annual meeting, and until their successors are duly appointed.

IX.

Any person who is a descendant of said Hans Graf, may become a member of this association, by signing these articles and paying into the Treasury a fee of fifty cents towards defraying incidental expenses.

X.

Persons who are not descendants of said Hans Graf, may be elected honorary members by the Executive Committee, who shall pay the same fee, and be entitled to the same privileges as any other members.

XI.

Every member, and every honorary member of this association shall be entitled to a published copy of the history of the Hans Graf Family, giving the names of each of his descendants, both the living and the dead, whenever the same shall be completed, and shall have at all times free access to the records and papers in possession of the association.

XII.

This association shall hold one annual meeting in each year, at such time and place in the County of Lancaster, Pa., as the President, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee may designate, of which notice shall be given one month previously. Special meetings may be held whenever and wherever called, as provided in Article IV. The order of business shall be presented at each meeting, by the President or Secretary.

LIST OF NAMES.

Francis Groff,	Baltimore,		Maryland.
Mrs. Catharine Spear,	do		do
Jacob F. Grove,	do		do
Levi W. Groff,	Bareville,	Lancaster Co.,	Penna.
Samuel Shoup,	Dayton,		Ohio.
Michael Hildebrand,	New Holland,	do	Penna.
David G. Martin,	Reidenbauch's Store,	do	do
Israel S. Groff,	Mountville,	do	do
David G. Swartz,	Lancaster,	do	do
David Groff,	New Holland.	do	do
Ezra Burkholder,	Farmersville,	do	do
Jacob Stauffer,	do	do	do
Christian F. Groff,	do	do	do
Levi Groff,	Bareville,	do	do
Elias G. Groff,	New Holland,	do	do
Anna C. Buehler,	Harrisburg,	Dauphin Co.,	do
Mary Locher,	do	do	do
Henry D. Groff,	Lancaster,	Lancaster Co.,	do
Adam Groff,	Groff's Store,	do	do
Abraham M. Martin,	Reidenbauch's Store,	do	do
Amos McCartney,	San Francisco,		California.
George Groff,	Bareville,	Lancaster Co.,	Penna.
Myer Diveler,	Farmersville,	do	do
Abraham Groff, (Miller)	Bareville,	do	do
Adam B. Groff,	do	do	do
John Franklin Groff,	do	do	do
Mark S. Groff,	Voganville,	do	do
Ida Groff,	Lancaster,	do	do
Mary Swartz,	do	do	do
George Smuller Swartz,	do	do	do
John Groff,	do	do	do
Isaac Groff,	New Holland,	do	do
David B. Landis,	Bareville,	do	do
Daniel G. Groff,	do	do	do
David G. Eshleman.	Lancaster,	do	do
Samuel Groff, jr.,	Groff's Store,	do	do
Charles Grove,	Columbia,	do	do
Frank Sutton,	Lancaster,	do	do
Milton J. Weidler,	do	do	do
Franklin Flynn,	do	do	do
Henry Getz,	Lewisburg,		do
Jacob Dindore,	Vicksburg,		do
John G. Kurtz,	Goodville,	Lancaster Co.,	do
Mrs. Eliza Brown,	Lancaster,	do	do

William C. Beecher,	Lancaster,	Lancaster Co.,	Penna.
John W. Groff,	Bareville,	do	do
Jacob R. Musser,	do	do	do
Marks G. Wenger,	Leacock,	do	do
Henry Burkhart,	Bareville,	do	do
Reuben B. Johns,	Leacock,	do	do
Christian Brubaker,	Lancaster,	do	do
Daniel Rife,	New Holland,	do	do
Solomon C. Groff,	Bareville,	do	do
Jacob G. Breneise,	Hinkletown,	do	do
Abraham Reiter,	New Holland,	do	do
Catharine Goshen, (widow)	do	do	do
Jacob G. Reiff,	Farmersville,	do	do
Jacob Esbenshade,	Binkley's Bridge,	do	do
Martin B. Peifer,	Mount Joy,	do	do
Isaac Rohrer,	Leacock,	do	do
Martin Grube,	Mount Joy,	do	do
Abraham S. Groff,	Lancaster,	do	do
Samuel Groff,	do	do	do
John W. Bucwalter,	Leacock,	do	do
Isaac Deardorf,	do	do	do
Gabriel Wenger,	Lampeter,	do	do
David Brubaker,	Hempfield,	do	do
Abraham Groff,	New Holland,	do	do
Grabill G. Wenger,	Leacock,	do	do
Elias Stone,	Bareville,	do	do
John Groff,	West Milton,	Union Co.,	do
David Ranck,	Ephrata,	Lancaster Co.,	do
Mrs. Mary Landis,	Groff's Store,	do	do
David Landis,	do	do	do
Mrs. Mary Sheaffer,	New Holland,	do	do
Samuel Groff,	Intercourse,	do	do
Daniel Groff,	Honeybrook,	Chester Co.,	do
Jacob Groff,	do	do	do
Mary Robinson,	do	do	do
Martin Beck,	Morgantown,	Berks Co.,	do
Michael G. Groff,	Voganville,	Lancaster Co.,	do
Solomon G. Groff,	do	do	do
Anna Mary Groff,	New Holland,	do	do
Charles Clarence Groff,	do	do	do
Helen Amelia Groff,	do	do	do
Catharine E. Groff,	do	do	do
Joel Wenger,	West Earl,	do	do
Elizabeth Binkley,	Lancaster,	do	do
John Line,	Leacock,	do	do
Abraham S. Bard,	Lancaster,	do	do
David W. Patterson,	do	do	do
Gabriel W. Groff,	Landisville,	do	do
David W. Groff,	Hinkletown,	do	do
Susan E. Marker,	Martinsburg,	Berkly Co., W. Virginia.	
Mrs. Mary Bare,	Bareville,	Lancaster Co.,	Penna.
Milton B. Eshleman,	Lemon Place,	do	do
Elam W. Eshleman,	do	do	do
A. Herr Smith,	Lancaster,	do	do
Israel H. Johns,	Leacock,	do	do
Horace Rathvon,	Lancaster,	do	do
H. Baungardner,	do	do	do

John B. Stehman,	Spring Garden,	Lancaster Co.,	Penna.
A. E. Roberts,	Lancaster,	do	do
Jacob G. Peters,	Slackwater,	do	do
Daniel Herr, Pequea,	Lancaster, Box 175,	do	do
H. M. Musser,	New Holland,	do	do
E. Pugh,	Gap,	do	do
James Stewart,	Lancaster,	do	do
David Bair,	do	do	do
Jos. Clarkson,	do	do	do
Jacob F. Fry,	do	do	do
Benj. Champneys,	do	do	do
Wm. L. Peiper,	do	do	do
A. B. Kaufman,	do	do	do
John Miller,	Marietta,	do	do
H. M. Engle,	do	do	do
E. Billingsfelt,	Adamstown,	do	do
J. P. Ronck,	Enterprise,	do	do
Amos Groff,	Providence,	do	do
Eckert Myers,	Voganville,	do	do
John Strohm,	New Providence,	do	do
Joel Lightner,	Paradise,	do	do
Jonathan Sprécher,	Lancaster,	do	do
John Johns,	do	do	do
Frances Hoffman,	Voganville,	do	do
Jacob G. Stone,	Ottowa,	La Salle Co.,	Illinois.
Daniel Stone,	Ashland,	Ashland Co.,	Ohio.
David S. Stone,	Bareville,	Lancaster Co.,	Penna.
David S. Rettew,	do	do	do
Nathaniel Ellmaker,	Lancaster,	do	do
Samuel B. Sheaffer,	New Holland,	do	do
John Musser,	Bareville,	do	do
J. J. Cochran,	Lancaster,	do	do
Benjamin L. Landis,	Oregon,	do	do
George Levan,	Lancaster,	do	do
Emanuel Shober,	do	do	do
Jacob Herr,	Lampeter,	do	do
Jacob M. Frantz,	Lancaster,	do	do
E. Reilly,	do	do	do
Isaac Weidler,	do	do	do
Joseph Gibbins,	Enterprise,	do	do
J. M. Dunlap,	Manheim,	do	do
Samuel Slocum,	Christiana,	do	do
Lewis Sprecher,	Lancaster,	do	do

Extracts from the Minutes.

At a meeting of the association held on the 29th day of August, 1866, the following resolution was adopted.

WHEREAS—In the year of 1867, it will be 150 years since Hans Graf settled in Earl township, Lancaster county, Pennsylvania:

Resolved—That the Executive Committee, in conjunction with the other officers, be hereby instructed to make arrangements for holding a semi-centennial Anniversary of the Hans Graf Family Associa-

tion, to provide that one or more addresses be delivered suitable to the occasion, to which meeting all the members of the Hans Graf Family Association, shall be specially invited by public notice, as well as all persons who may choose to attend the same.

REMARKS.

A few of the descendants of Hans Graf, during many years past, expressed a desire to preserve the history and genialogy of their family. They saw the oldest members of the family, one after another rapidly carried to the grave, and it became obvious to them, that unless some means were taken to preserve its history, that the stories of tradition handed down from father to son must soon be forgotten ; and the numerous descendants of this ancestor, be forever unable to trace their descent to one of the first emigrants, among the pioneers of liberty, who fled from oppression in the kingdoms of Europe and planted the seeds of our free government in the wilds of America.

At one time it was proposed to erect a monument at the tomb of Hans Graf, the first settler of Earl township. But as in the case of Moses, his sepulchre was then unknown ; and no one could tell where his bones had been laid to rest. This however led to inquiry and search for his grave, which was soon after discovered in the graveyard attached to Groff's meeting house, marked with a rough sandstone slab, on which the initials H. G. are still legible, though nearly effaced by the rains and snows of one hundred and twenty winters. The examination of title papers, disclosed the fact that the land now belonging to the meeting house, was purchased by said Hans Graf, from the heirs of William Penn, the proprietors of the colony of Pennsylvania, and deeded to the meeting house, or society of Menonites, by one of the sons of Hans Graf.

On several occasions, also, reports were received by some of the family, substantiated by what seemed to be plausible evidence of large estates in distant parts of the country, which would revert to some of the descendants of Hans Graf, if their ancestry could be traced up and legally established.

After some preliminary meetings which soon became interesting and pleasing as social gatherings, and profitable in eliciting information, and developing the magnitude and eventful history of the family, it was agreed to form a permanent family association, the nature and object of which are briefly set forth in the Constitution.

That such an association can be made highly interesting as well as useful, will scarcely be questioned. Although in our democratic

republican government, there is no distinction of blood, and all men are brothers and equals before the law, and every man properly honored only according to his merits, and not as in England, according to his family; yet we believe that more care should be exercised in preserving the genialogy of our people. Not only as a matter of personal interest, but as a matter of public utility also. Death is constantly distributing property; and how often are courts and juries perplexed in deciding on the distribution of estates?

In many cases estates have been pending for many years and possibly not justly awarded in the end, because the proper information could not be had. How easily could each generation record its own nativity! The Legislatures of some of the states, aware of this indifference of the people, have provided against it, by enacting laws, requiring a public record of each birth; and should not the individual himself show as much interest to his own nativity as Legislative bodies?

The nations of antiquity looked upon this matter as one of great importance. Without the modern facilities of cheap paper and printing presses, they preserved their genialogy through many generations with wonderful accuracy. It is remarkable with what facility the Apostles trace the genialogy of our Saviour through forty-two generations in a direct line back to Adam and the beginning of the world.

We hope, therefore, this association may not be looked upon as a selfish one. Though formed expressly to trace up a particular family, all other persons who may wish to do so, are invited to become members of it, and to participate in all its meetings. The object will be to merit the approbation of the public, and we cherish the hope that it may become exemplary for good, and that other similar associations may be formed in various parts of the country. The family of many of the first settlers in America, who came here before the cradle of Liberty was rocked, could at this day still be traced up. In a generation later, this will be almost impossible, as time will then have effaced the records of tradition; and so future generations would loose all traces of their nationality or ancestry at the beginning of our government. And should our nation, as we hope it may, survive many centuries, and become as old as England or China in the progress of greatness, may it not be hoped that some few at least, a thousand years hence, through the incipient agency of this association, may be able to trace back their lineal ancestry through the changes of time, and the succession of generations, to Hans Graf, who settled in America sixty years before the declaration of American Independence.

On the subject of consanguinity, we quote a few passages from the learned Sir William Blackstone:

"The doctrine of lineal consanguinity is sufficiently plain and obvious; but it is at the first view astonishing to consider the number of lineal ancestors which every man has, within no very great number of degrees; and so many different bloods is a man said to contain in his veins, as he has lineal ancestors. Of these he has two in the first ascending degree, his own parents; he has four in the second, the parents of his father, and the parents of his mother; he has eight in the third, the parents of his two grandfathers, and two grandmothers; and by the same rule of progression he has a hundred and twenty-eight in the seventh; a thousand and twenty-four in the tenth and at the twentieth degree, or the distance of twenty generations, every man has above a million of ancestors, as common arithmetic will demonstrate.

"And as we are taught by holy writ, that there is one couple of ancestors belonging to us all, from whom the whole race of mankind is descended, the obvious and undeniable consequence is, that all men are in some degree related to each other. For in deed if we only suppose each couple of our ancestors to have left, one with another, two children; and each of those children on an average to have left two more (and without such a supposition, the human species must be daily diminishing); we shall find that all of us have now subsisting near two hundred and seventy millions of kindred in the fifteenth degree, at the same distance from the several common ancestors as ourselves are; besides those that are one or two descents nearer to, or farther from the common stock, who may amount to as many more. And if this calculation should appear incompatible with the number of inhabitants on the earth, it is because by intermarriage among the several descendants from the same ancestor, a hundred, or a thousand modes of consanguinity may be consolidated in one person, or he may be related to us a hundred or a thousand different ways.

"This immense increase of numbers depends on the supposition that no one marries a relation; but to avoid such a connexion it will very soon be necessary to leave the kingdom.

"If two men and two women were put upon an uninhabited island, and became two married couple, if they had only two children each, a male and a female, who respectively intermarried, and in like manner produced two children, who are thus continued *ad infinitum*; it is clear that there would never be more than four persons in each generation; and if the parents lived to see their great grand-children, the whole number would never be more than sixteen; and thus the families might be perpetuated without any incestuous connexion."